

- 9 A -

1 MUSIC: Semper Paratus....Up...then behind and out

2 REYNOLDS: Things are going pretty well for us these days. So
3 So well, in fact, it seems ages ago that we were
4 getting an A Number One, first class shellacking
5 in as tough and important a battle as American
6 fighting men ever fought. It was the battle of the
7 Atlantic, and we won that, but the price was high.
8 Lots of Americans are still paying that price.
9 Yesterday in the cold, bare United States Coast
10 Guard offices here in New York an Admiral told a
11 handsome colored woman and a bright little boy
12 something they knew only too well. He told them:

13 ADMIRAL: Your husband...and your father, Charles Walter David,
14 Steward's Mate First Class, died in the service of
15 his country. He died a hero ...because he died
16 so that others might live.

17 REYNOLDS: He gave Mrs. David the Navy and Marine medal, and as
18 he did a young tow headed Coast Guard Lieutenant
19 watched. I don't know what exactly was going through
20 this lieutenant's mind at the moment, but I can guess.
21 Because Charles Walter David saved his life. The
22 Lieutenant is Robert Anderson, and he's here tonight.
23 This is what he told us.

jm

1 ANDERSON: It was deep in the North Atlantic. The weather was
2 freezing and a gale was blowing as our huge convoy
3 and it's pitifully small escort wallowed through the
4 waves. Off to port a troop ship...carrying about a
5 thousand crack Army technicians pitched and tossed.
6 I could barely see it through the wind and the rain
7 when suddenly the troop ship was enveloped in a yellow
8 and green flame and a second later I heard the
9 explosion. I remember a sailor saying:

10 SAILOR: Good Lord, Mr. Anderson...they blew that troop ship
11 right out of the water.

12 ANDERSON: Sound general quarters...

13 SOUND: General quarters.

14 SAILOR: We won't get many out of this, Mr. Anderson. Them
15 as wasn't blown to bits will be frozen in two
16 minutes.

17 MUSIC: Tag then behind.

jm

1 REYNOLDS: Then Anderson told us of the Coast Guard ship
2 Comanche...that was his ship...and the job it did
3 that cold night. The sea suddenly became alive with
4 tiny red lights...the life jacket lights that come on
5 automatically. Anderson went overside grabbing life
6 rafts and making them fast. Everywhere he went a huge
7 negro....that was David...went with him. It was
8 tough, dangerous and unbelievably sad work. Because
9 on some life rafts they would find only one or two
10 live men....the remainder would be frozen stiff in
11 death. On some all would be frozen. David's normal
12 job was fetching a cup of coffee when somebody called
13 for it, but on that sad night Anderson noticed
14 something strange. David, on his occasional trips
15 back to the Comanche, seemed to instinctively know
16 what orders to give, what tools to ask for. He was
17 brave and he was smart. Smart enough, even in the
18 terrible confusion, to run once to the captain and
19 tell him he was sailing off, leaving Anderson
20 somewhere in the ocean on a life raft. Charles Walter
21 David did great work that night. And he kept at it so
22 long he killed himself through exhaustion and
23 pneumonia. And you can't do any more than that...
24 whether you be a mess boy or an Admiral.

25 MUSIC: TAG

jm

Greenland
Patrol
USS
Dorchester
February
1943
Charles
David
Executive
Officer

Mate

1 REYNOLDS: Lieutenant Anderson won the Navy and Marin Medal
2 that night, too. He's here now in Report to the
3 Nation's studios and we'd like you to meet him.

4 Lieutenant Anderson:

MR. Reynolds

5 ANDERSON: That was a tough night. We managed to drag ninety *FOUR*
6 aboard the Comanche and our sister ship got a hundred
7 and twenty-three. But many hundreds died. The only
8 consolation is that they died fast, terribly fast.
9 Charles David wasn't so lucky. He was a giant of a
10 man and he gave pneumonia the same fight he gave
11 the Atlantic...but he lost after almost a month.
12 Charles David saved a lot of men that night..and one
13 of the men he saved was me. He saved some with his
14 giant strength, he saved others with his brain...
15 he saved them all with sheer, raw courage. I hope
16 his son and his wife derive some comfort from the
17 knowledge that Charles David was a great American.

18 MUSIC: TO TAG.